The Ministry of Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism
The Research Unit

CAIR Organization Overview

Study Findings

August 2024

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Executive Summary

The process of its establishment and the organization's ties to terrorism

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1994 that operates under Section c(3)(501) of the Internal Revenue Code, which does not allow it to lobby for it. The organization has a national headquarters in Washington, D.C., and 32 regional chapters spanning more than 20 states. Its current executive director is Nihad Awad.

CAIR has had historical roots in Hamas since its inception. The **Philadelphia Meeting**, held in 1993, was an event convened by the Palestine Committee in response to the Oslo Accords. Before that, in 1988, the Palestine Committee in the U.S. brought together Hamas' activities in the United States in the areas of fundraising, lobbying, education, and propaganda. The meeting was held to discuss the impact of the Oslo Accords and formulate strategies to oppose the agreement while continuing to support Hamas' goals covertly.

FBI officials, who closely monitored the Palestine Committee, set up wiretaps inside the hotel, recording most of the conversations that took place behind the doors of the hotel's conference room. Transcripts of most of the conversations were presented as evidence in the trial against the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development (HLF).

HLF is a charitable organization established in 1989 to raise funds for Hamas, including organizations linked to Mousa Abu Marzook, a senior Hamas figure in charge of the organization's finances. After a trial of several years, the organization was shut down, and five of its senior officials were sent to prison in the United States. HLF managed to raise about $12 million for Hamas by transferring it to institutions directly affiliated with Hamas. In this trial, another American organization that was convicted and shut down was the Islamic Association of Palestine (IAP) on charges of transferring material aid to Hamas for terrorist activity.

The IAP's ties with Hamas are significant and well-documented. The organization was founded under the supervision of senior Hamas senior leaders Khaled Mashaal and Musa Abu Marzook. The IAP served as a front for Hamas, promoted its agenda, and supported its activities. The FBI investigation revealed Abu Marzook's direct links to the establishment of HLF and IAP as chairman of the Palestine Committee. When IAP was established, Abu Marzook provided them with $150,000 in initial funding as an example of the existing evidence of these connections.

The meeting, which was organized similarly to a meeting of the board of directors of a large corporation, began with security guidelines, with participants instructed to refer to Hamas as "Samah" – its name in

reverse – or simply as "the movement" throughout the meeting and in telephone conversations. Participants then began condemning the Oslo Accords, which Omar Ahmed called an agreement "between infidels and infidels." Formulating a joint position against the agreements was not difficult. The participants discussed ways to undermine them in the eyes of the Americans. Being aware of the environment in which they operate, some speakers stressed the need to frame their opposition to the peace agreement in terms that would suit the Americans.

Among the points discussed at the meeting was the need to establish a new organization that would appear neutral and less extreme to the American public. This new organization will cover pro-Hamas existing activities and maintain a moderate image. A few months after this meeting, CAIR was established in Washington, D.C., with founding members previously involved in the Palestine Committee and its affiliated organizations and attending the conference. IAP President Omar Ahmed and Public Relations Director Nihad Awad, Palestine Committee members who attended the Philadelphia meeting, became CAIR's Honorary Chairman and CEO. Rafeeq Jabar, president of IAP, also became a founding director of CAIR, while former IAP employee Ibrahim Hooper became CAIR's communications director. Ghassan Elashi, treasurer of the Holy Land Foundation, became a founding board member of CAIR's Texas chapter. As the evidence presented at the Dallas trial showed, HLF also transferred funds to CAIR for "consulting services." Finally, a July 1994 internal memorandum of the Palestine Committee recognized CAIR, along with IAP, UASR, and HLF, as part of the Committee.

It should also be noted that documents found as part of HLF's investigation identified a contact page of the Palestine Committee, which concentrates essential contact details of individuals on the Palestinian issue in the United States—Musa Abu Marzook's contact details appear first on the page, with other personalities such as Omar Ahmed and Nihad Awad also appearing.

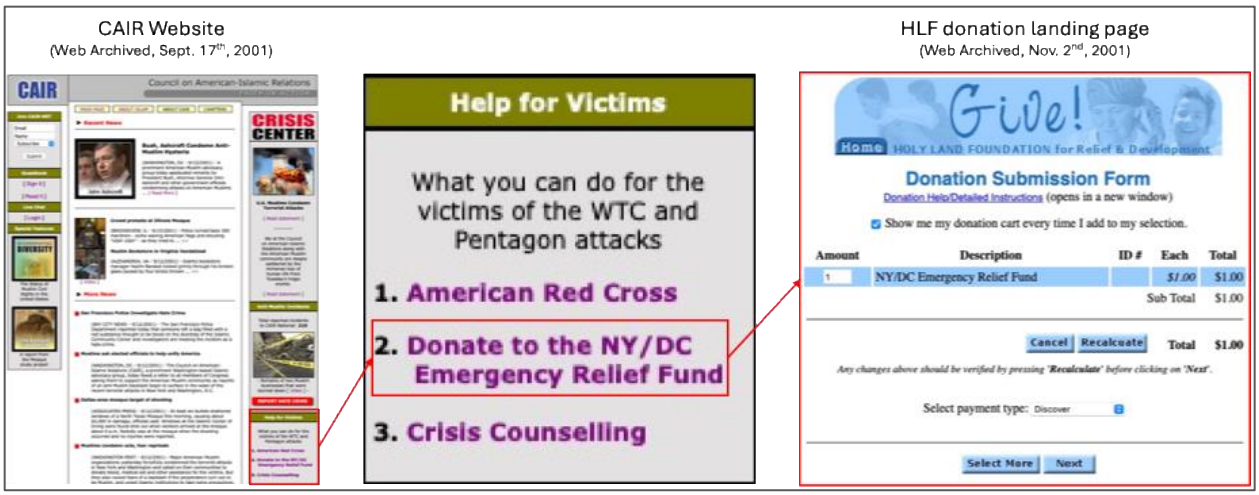
		Past position	Position at CAIR
	Omar Ahmed **aka Omar Yehya**	President of IAP	President (Former)
	Nihad Awad	Public relations manager at IAP	CEO
	Ghassan Elashi	Treasurer of HLF	Director and Founder of CAIR's Texas Chapter (HLF had operated from Texas)
	Rafeeq Jabar	President of IAP	Founding Director
	Ibrahim Hooper	Employee at IAP	Head of Communications

It is important to note that senior Hamas figure Musa Abu Marzook was the coordinator of Hamas' activity in the United States until he was arrested in 1995. Among other things, HLF's affair links his activity to the support of the organizations in the United States to Hamas.

Siraj Wahhaj, imam of the At-Taqwa Mosque in Brooklyn, was a Board Member of CAIR's national headquarters. The U.S. Department of Justice designated Wahhaj as an unindicted co-conspirator during the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

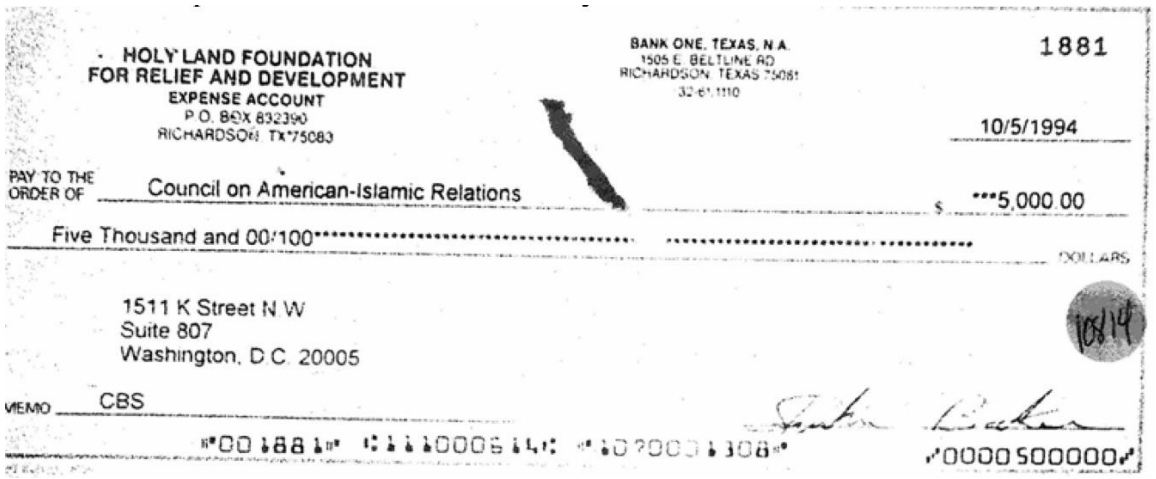
The economic relationship between CAIR and the Holy Land Foundation

After 9/11, the organization incorporated a fundraising link for the NY/DC Emergency Relief Fund on its web page. Clicking on the link leads to the Holy Land Foundation's fundraising page, which raised $12 million for Hamas during its years of activity.



In addition, multiple indications indicate that HLF provided initial funding for CAIR upon its inception in the 1990s. Evidence of this can be found in many official documents, such as the Florida Senate resolution, a similar resolution by the Arkansas House of Representatives in 2019, and numerous articles. In various cases, CAIR served as a fundraising arm for HLF.

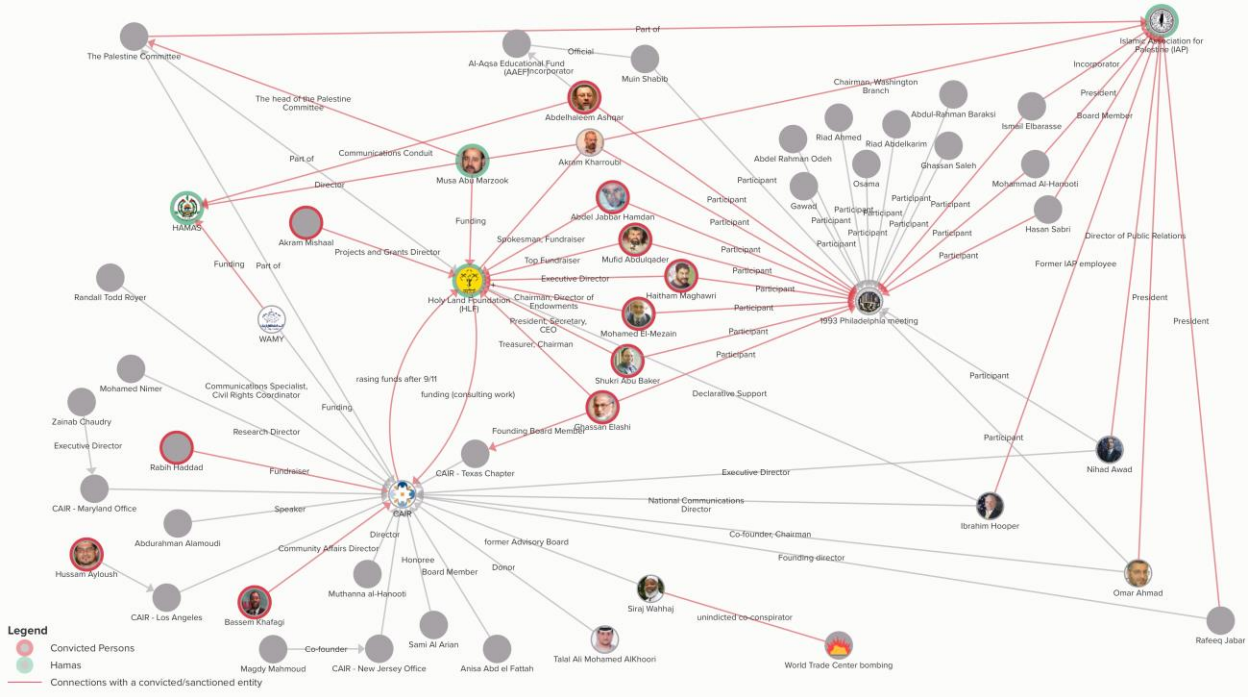
The $5,000 funding was critical for the organization in its inception. This amount was received by physical check and cashed by CAIR, indicating personal relations between the parties. The following is a photocopy of the check as obtained during the HLF investigation:



The map of ties below shows CAIR's connection to Hamas on several axes:

1. Contact between CAIR members from their position in the IAP, which was closed due to his ties and support for Hamas.
2. Attending a meeting in Philadelphia, where out of 21 mapped participants, 11 people were convicted and jailed, including three from the IAP and the rest from the HLF.

3. Funding, fundraising, and transfer routes between HLF and CAIR.
4. Persons who have been convicted or are related/are part of a convicted organization, either at the first level (such as Bassem Khafagi and Rabih Haddad) or at the second and third levels.



The organization's network can be found at embed.kumu.io/a74e55de0fa2731d5bc4fd3a5953bff7

The development of the organization and its activities

As mentioned above, the organization has a national headquarters and 32 chapters. About a year after its establishment and for about a decade, branches began to be established throughout the United States. To establish a chapter, activists must present a one-year plan, establish a local board of directors, and demonstrate "sufficient local support." However, because the organization grew relatively rapidly, it can be concluded that it had a proactive process to establish branches throughout the United States.

We understand that the current structure allows it to be perceived as an NGO serving the Muslim community, province, or state without direct connection to Hamas. The branches carry out a variety of educational activities and assist the population, such as collecting donations for civil activity, supporting local politicians, and more.

In practice, the organization's pervasive activity can be seen, whether in donations to political candidates or its diverse grassroots activity. Therefore, despite its deep-rooted ties to Hamas in the United States,

it is challenging to link the organization as an arm of Hamas in the United States. The organization carries out lobbying activities in practice, even though they are not authorized under its incorporation.

For example, funding for local branches is raised independently, and the national headquarters supports the collection of donations but does not transfer funds to the regional branches.

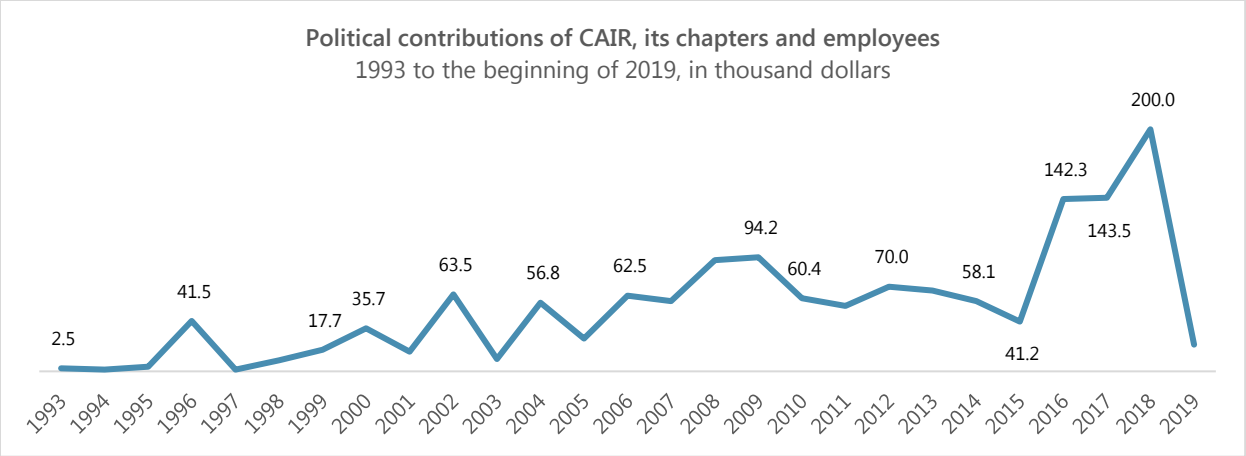
The national headquarters maintains communication and coordination between the branches through regular meetings, training, and conferences. According to Nihad Awad, this management structure allows CAIR to "leverage the strengths and insights of the organization's local branches while maintaining a unified national presence."

The national headquarters establishes policies and procedures that guide the operation of regional branches. These policies cover areas such as financial management, human resources, legal compliance, and program implementation. The National Office also conducts regular audits and evaluations to ensure that branches operate following CAIR's standards.

Among the activities promoted by the organization are education, political lobbying (promoting an agenda and supporting and funding candidates), field demonstrations, and assistance to the Muslim population in the United States.

Regarding **education**, the organization conducts various seminars, some of which are controversial. For example, the organization makes great efforts to change the terminology surrounding 9/11 and remove the terminology linking Islam to terrorist attacks. For instance, in a lesson plan called *Remembering and Reflecting September 11, 2001, in the Classroom*, there are clear instructions to separate the events of 9/11 from Islam and try not to mention the words "jihad," "Islamist terrorism," or "Islamic terrorist."

As part of its ongoing activities, **the organization promotes its agenda through lobbying (although it is not authorized to do so), emphasizing** activity with the Democratic Party. An analysis of individual contribution data up to the beginning of 2019 shows growth in funding volumes over the years, with the peak year being 2018, when CAIR, its chapters, and individuals connected to CIAR donated almost $200,000. Most of the funding (84%) went to the Democratic Party and its members (compared to only 13% for the Republican Party).



An analysis of the database shows that over the years, through more than 330 donors affiliated with the organization (functionaries or those affiliated), the organization has funded close to a million and a half dollars from its inception until 2019—the individuals who received the most donations were senators and presidential candidates, mainly from the Democratic Party.

Notable figures who have received donations over the years include Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, Rashida Tlaib, Ilian Omar, Cynthia McKinney, and Andre Carson – all members of the Democratic Party.

Keith Ellison, an American politician who serves as Minnesota Attorney General, received the most donations from the organization. From 2006 to 2018, he received donations totaling $140,900.

Supporting terrorism, antisemitism, and anti-Israeli activity

In 1994, Awad declared support for Hamas, although later, in 2006, he stated that he no longer supported Hamas. In November 1994, four weeks after a Hamas suicide bombing that killed 23 Israelis, Awad was interviewed on CBS's "60 Minutes" news program, where he was asked his opinion of Hamas and replied that "the United Nations Charter gives people under occupation to defend themselves from unlawful occupation."

Most recently, in November 2023, Awad sparked outrage with statements that appeared to praise the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel that killed more than 1,200 people:

"The people of Gaza only decided to break the siege, the walls of the concentration camp, on October 7. And yes, I was happy to see people breaking the siege and throwing down the shackles of their own land, and walk free into their land, which they were not allowed to walk in. And yes, the people of Gaza have the right to self-defense, have the right to defend themselves, and yes, Israel, as an occupying power, does not have that right to self-defense."[1]

Awad is frequently present at pro-Palestinian demonstrations and often condemns the activities of Israel in the Gaza Strip and the P.A., especially after the events of October 7. On October 8, 2023, he posted the following:

"All Arab peoples must go out on Sunday, October 8, and every day, in demonstrations in support of the Palestinians and in rejection of normalization with the occupier and the apartheid regime."[2]

In general, the organization responds to allegations made against it by labeling the accusers as "extreme right-wing organizations with an anti-Muslim and racist agenda." These allegations are often directed at its senior officials and various activities. The organization consistently works to disprove these claims, using articles on its website to provide in-depth analysis that reveals unsatisfactory arguments or denies any connection to Hamas and any terrorist activity.

Insights and significance of the organization

1. The organization has had strong connections with Hamas since the 1990s. Despite these connections, the organization itself was not convicted. However, its senior officials and founders have direct ties to convicted and defunct organizations (IAP and HLF), which were partners involved in the 1993 Philadelphia meeting.
2. At the Philadelphia meeting, it was decided to establish an organization perceived as more moderate by Americans. CAIR is known as a human rights organization that advocates for a pro-Muslim agenda.
3. The organization heavily invests in deflecting criticism and attempts to portray it as affiliated with Hamas. The main arguments used are attacks by extreme right-wing elements in the United States, driven by an anti-Muslim and racist agenda.
4. The organization operates numerous branches across the United States. Its activities are not associated directly with Hamas, except for historical ties and controversial statements related to Hamas and its activities, especially in the context of the events of October 7.
5. The organization has strong ties to various government activities, such as participating in government committees on issues like **antisemitism**, human rights, and Islam.
6. The organization had multiple contacts with the FBI regarding educational and training matters. However, internal FBI documents show that these contacts were made in violation of instructions. This violation occurred after the HLF trial, which stated that any contact not related to FBI investigations was strictly prohibited.
7. The Florida Senate issued a specific recommendation to all state institutions to sever all ties with CAIR due to its connections to Hamas, statements made by its senior officials, and its support for terrorism.
8. The UAE designated CAIR as a terrorist organization back in 2014.

Chapter 1: Overview

background

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1994 under Section C(3)(501) of the Internal Revenue Code.[3] The organization has a national headquarters in Washington, DC, and 32 regional chapters in more than 20 states. Its current CEO is Nihad Awad.

CAIR's mission is to "improve understanding and inclusion of Islam, protect civil rights, promote justice, and empower American Muslims."

According to the website, the organization engages in various activities: "appearances in the media, lobbying, education and advocacy. In addition, CAIR provides representation and legal advice to individuals who have experienced religious discrimination or hate crimes and monitors local and national media to respond to the expression of negative stereotypes against Muslims and Islam. The organization also encourages voter registration and provides transportation to polling stations to increase Muslim participation in the political arena. The organization also offers educational programs, such as training workshops for a variety and seminars for government agencies, law enforcement agencies, and media members."

Agenda

Islamist line

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) presents itself as a moderate civil rights group, but it is labeled as an extremist organization with links to terrorism. As evidence, in 2014, the UAE designated CAIR as a terrorist organization due to its ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, although CAIR denies this. Furthermore, the organization was founded and is still managed by individuals affiliated with organizations previously linked to Hamas, and it was even shut down as a result.

In addition to these, several past statements by CAIR leaders attest to the Islamist line and perception of the organization. For example, Omar Ahmad, one of the organization's founders, was quoted as saying that Islam should be the dominant faith in America. In another example, spokesman Ibrahim Hooper expressed hope for an Islamic government in the United States in the future. The organization also has roots in a Hamas proxy called the Islamic Association for Palestine.

Attitude towards Israel

CAIR frequently criticizes Israel and condemns Israeli policies and military actions against the Palestinians. The organization's leader, Nihad Awad, recently expressed support for Hamas' actions on October 7, 2023, calling it "self-defense," and admitted that he was happy to see Gazans "walking free on their land."

CAIR is also active in supporting pro-Palestinian student demonstrations against Israel on campuses across the United States. In May 2024, CAIR hosted a webinar that provided resources for students protesting the "genocide in Gaza."[4] CAIR chapters nationwide supported students' free speech rights by calling for "an end to the Israeli genocide, ethnic cleansing, and forced starvation."[5] This framing of the conflict in terms as extreme as genocide demonstrates CAIR's anti-Israel stance.

Despite presenting itself as mainstream, CAIR is a controversial organization with ties to terrorist organizations and anti-Israel and antisemitic attitudes. Its advocacy of campus anti-Israel protests, including rhetoric accusing Israel of genocide, provides strong evidence of the group's Islamist line and anti-Israel stance.

Organizational structure

The organization is structured as a federation of legally independent chapters, each operating autonomously but aligned with the mission and principles of the central headquarters.

National Headquarters

Located on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, the Bureau coordinates and supports the activities of regional chapters throughout the United States. It employs approximately 57 full-time staff members who manage various departments, including communications, legal affairs, government relations, and community outreach.

Key personnel at headquarters

- Nihad Awad is the CEO and one of the founders. Responsible for overseeing the strategy and day-to-day activities of the organization.
- Edward Ahmed Mitchell – Vice President. Responsible for assisting the CEO in managing the national headquarters and implementing CAIR's strategic initiatives.
- Ibrahim Hooper: Director of Communications and Public Relations.
- Lena Masri: National Litigation and Civil Rights Director, General Counsel.
- Omar Ali: I.T. department manager.
- Priscilla Ellison: Director of People and Culture.

- Corey Saylor: Research and Advocacy Director, specializing in political communication and prejudice against Islam.
- Robert McCaw: Government Affairs Department Director leads CAIR's civic engagement and legislative advocacy.

Regional Chapters

CAIR's regional chapters are organized and operate independently. Local activists established each chapter based on CAIR's vision and mission. The relationship between the national headquarters and the regional branches is cooperative but allows for significant autonomy. The headquarters provides strategic guidance, resources, and support to regional chapters, ensuring alignment with CAIR's overall mission and objectives. However, each branch operates independently, managing its activities, raising funds, and initiating local activities. Each branch has its board of directors, CEO, employees, and volunteers. Chapters are responsible for addressing regional issues, reaching the community, implementing programs at the local level, and initiating local projects in line with the organization's goals.

To establish a chapter, activists must present a one-year plan, establish a local board of directors, and demonstrate "sufficient local support." Branches raise their funds independently; the national headquarters supports the collection of donations but does not transfer funds to the regional branches.

The national headquarters maintains communication and coordination between the branches through regular meetings, training, and conferences. According to Nihad Awad, this management structure allows CAIR to "leverage the strengths and insights of the organization's local branches while maintaining a unified national presence."

The national headquarters establishes policies and procedures that guide the operation of regional branches. These policies cover financial management, human resources, legal compliance, and program implementation. The National Office also conducts regular audits and evaluations to ensure that branches operate following CAIR's standards.

The organization's branches in the United States

CAIR has 32 chapters in 24 states. CAIR is headquartered in Washington, DC. There has been no evidence of declared chapters outside the United States.

All branches are operational except the Connecticut branch, which was closed at the beginning of the previous decade. CAIR has one branch in Ohio, Pennsylvania, California, and Texas.

The branches in Georgia, Kentucky, and North Carolina use the physical infrastructure of various campuses and universities in their area of operation and need a physical headquarters. They rely on the organization's headquarters for administrative and operational purposes. The Kansas, Nevada, and South Carolina chapters do not have an independent website, and some operate social media accounts to enter digital marketing of the organization's activities.

Country	Branch Name	Address	Key branch management personnel.[6]	Comments
Washington D.C. (H.Q.)	Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)	453 New Jersey Avenue, SE Washington, DC 20003	Nihad Awad, Executive Director.	
Arizona	CAIR Arizona	1819 S. Dobson Rd. Ste.214Mesa, AZ 85202	Azza Abuseif, Executive Director.[7]	
California	CAIR Los Angeles	2180 W. Crescent Avenue, Suite F, Anaheim, CA 92801	Hussam Ayloush, CEO	
	CAIR Sacramento Valley	717 K St Suite 217, Sacramento, CA 95814	Basim Elkarra, Executive Director	
	CAIR San Diego	7710 Balboa Avenue, Suite 326, San Diego, CA 92111	Cecilia Peralta – Executive Director	
	CAIR San Francisco Bay Area	3350Scott Blvd., Bldg. 48, Santa Clara, CA 95054	Zahra Billoo, Esq., Executive Director	
Connecticut	CAIR Connecticut	No address found	Tark Aouadi, Executive Director	The branch's website has been inactive since 2008 and does not appear in the list of branches on the organization's headquarters website. From this, the branch seems to have closed or ceased to exist.
Florida	CAIR Florida	8076 N 56th St., Tampa, FL 33617 (Main Office)	Imam Abdullah Jaber, Executive Director.[8]	
Georgia	CAIR Georgia	P.O. Box 956263, Duluth, GA 30095	Azka Mahmood, Executive Director.[10]	This is an address for sending letters. The organization frequently uses the infrastructure of local campuses for its activities.[9]
Illinois	CAIR Chicago	17 N. State Street, Suite 1500, Chicago, IL 60602	Ahmed Rehab, Executive Director.	
Kansas	FALL Kansas	3514 Clinton Parkway, A-333 Lawrence, KS 66047	Moussa Elbayoumy, Executive Director.[12]	There is no separate website for the chapter. The Kansas chapter uses the headquarters of the central branch in Washington, D.C., and operates several social media accounts, including a Twitter account [11]—identification of the governing party.
Kentucky	CAIR Kentucky	No address was provided. The organization appears to be using various campuses across the country for its field activities.[15]	Waheeda Mohammed, Kerry-Kentucky teased.[14]	The branch's website has been inactive since 2009. It operates several social media accounts, including a Twitter account.[13]
Maryland	CAIR Maryland	6120 Baltimore National Pike, Suite 2D, Baltimore, MD 21228	Zainab Chaudry – Director of CAIR's Office in Maryland.	The branch's website has been inactive since 2010. However, it appears that the branch was active until 2020.[16]

Massachusetts	CAIR Massachusetts	A. 800 Boylston Street, P.O. Box 990445, Boston, MA 02199 B. 123 South Street, Suite 3, Boston, MA 02111	Tahira Amatul-Wadud, Executive Director.	
Michigan	CAIR Michigan	A. 30201 Orchard Lake Rd, Suite 260, Farmington Hills, MI 48334. 1905 Haggerty Rd. Suite #5, Canton, MI 48188.	Dawud Walid, Executive Director.	
Minnesota	CAIR Minnesota	2511 East Franklin Ave Suite #100, Minneapolis, MN 55406	Jaylani Hussein, Executive Director.	
Missouri	CAIR Saint Louis	13422Clayton Rd Suite 207a, St. Louis, MO 63131, United States. [18]	Moji Sidiqi, Executive Director.[17]	
Nevada	CAIR Nevada	501 S. Sixth St., Las Vegas, NV		The branch website is inactive. It was established in 2021 and inaugurated by the Mayor of Las Vegas.[19]
New Jersey	CAIR New Jersey	570 Broad Street, Suite 703, Newark, NJ 07102	Selaedin Maksut, Executive Director.	
New York	Council on American-Islamic Relations, New York (CAIR-NY)	80 Broad Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10004	Afaf Nasher, Esq., Executive Director.	
North Carolina	CAIR North Carolina	Raleigh, NC 27603	Al Rieder, Regional Community Engagement Manager.	There is no independent website for the chapter indicating that it will be operational from February 2024, and that is the infrastructure of an organization called the Wilmington Islamic Learning Center at 315 N 17th St, Wilmington.[20]
Ohio	CAIR Ohio (Cincinnati)	5740Gateway Blvd # 201, Mason, OH 45040, United States	Khalid Turaani, the Executive Director of CAIR-Ohio (Cincinnati, Columbus).	Ohio has an organizational split between the Cincinnati and Columbus chapters and the Cleveland chapter. These are two separate entities managed under separate management.
	CAIR Ohio (Columbus)	4985Cemetery Rd, Hilliard, OH 43026, United States		
	CAIR Ohio (Cleveland)	Asia Plaza Building 2999 Payne Avenue Suite 220 Cleveland, Ohio 44114	Faten Husni Odeh, Executive Director for the Cleveland & Northern Chapter of CAIR-Ohio.[21]	
Oklahoma	CAIR Oklahoma	3000 United Founders Blvd.Suite 226 Oklahoma City, OK 73112	Adam Soltani, Executive Director.	
Oregon	FALL Oregon	13909SE Stark St, Portland, OR 97233, United States.[24]	Zakir Khan, Board Chair.[22] Sahar Yarjani Muranovic, Executive Director.[23]	
Pennsylvania	CAIR Pennsylvania - Philadelphia	1501 Cherry St. Philadelphia, PA 19102	Ahmet Tekelioglu, Executive Director.	
	CAIR Pennsylvania - Pittsburgh	801 N. Negley Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15206	Christine Mohamed, Executive Director.	
Texas	CAIR Texas – Dallas-Fort Worth	Park Plaza, 13111 N Central Expy Suite 380, Dallas, TX 75243, United States.[26]	John Janney, Executive Director.[25]	

	CAIR Texas – Austin	A. 13492Research Blvd #120-349, Austin, TX 78750, United States.[29] B .16238 Ranch Road 620 N STE-F168 Austin, TX 78717	Faizan Syed, Executive Director.[28]	There is a separate site from the general site for CAIR Austin, which has been inactive since 2020.[27]
	CAIR Houston	7211 Regency Square Boulevard, Suite 201	William White, Director.	
Washington	CAIR Seattle	1511 3rd Ave Suite #701 Seattle, WA 98101	Imraan Siddiqi, Executive Director.	

History and the Establishment Process

The organization's founding process is linked to Hamas' network of organizations in the United States. Understanding the history of Hamas' activity in the United States is necessary to understand the background of the organization's establishment.

Historical background of Hamas in the United States[30]

Hamas has its roots in the United States, starting in the 1960s when a small number of Palestinians affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood immigrated to the United States for educational purposes. As the political landscape in the Middle East evolved, these individuals began to organize and support the Palestinian cause, eventually breaking away from the position of the Palestinian Authority. This led to the establishment of Hamas in 1987.

In the United States, several influential figures have been crucial in supporting Hamas. One of the prominent figures is Musa Abu Marzook, a member of Hamas' Political Bureau. Marzook, along with other individuals that have affiliation with the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas, established civilian organizations that provided support to Hamas.

Palestine Committee

In 1988, the Palestine Committee was established with Musa Abu Marzook as its leader as part of the Muslim Brotherhood's efforts to support Hamas activity in the United States. The main objectives of the Palestine Committee were to increase financial and political support for Hamas, oppose peace solutions that did not meet their goals, and spread anti-Israel agenda among American Muslims. The Palestine Committee is intended to serve as the main body coordinating the various activities and organizations of the Hamas network in the United States.

The main goals of the Palestine Committee were:

- Provide financial and material support to Hamas.

- Increase moral and political support for Hamas among American Muslims.
- Oppose peace initiatives are perceived as violating Palestinian rights.
- Promote anti-Israel propaganda.

These goals were accomplished through a variety of methods, including establishing front organizations, conducting fundraising activities, and engaging in lobbying efforts.

Influential figures on the web:

- Musa Abu Marzook: Former head of Hamas' Political Bureau and a member of Hamas' Political Bureau. Abu Marzook played a significant role in establishing and leading Hamas' efforts in the United States. He was instrumental in establishing and developing the IAP and HLF as part of his role as head of the IAP. Palestine Committee
- Nihad Awad: Co-founder of CAIR. Served as Director of Public Relations at IAP before founding CAIR. He is currently president of CAIR.
- Omar Ahmed: Co-founder of CAIR, President of the IAP, and a leading figure on the Palestine Committee.
- Shukri Abu Baker: President and CEO of the Holy Land Foundation. He was responsible for overseeing HLF's financial activities, which poured millions of dollars into supporting Hamas. He was also involved with the IAP as a member of its national advisory board. American authorities sentenced him to 60 years in prison in a trial against the HLF.[31]
- Ghassan Elashi: He was the HLF's treasurer and a founding member of the Texas branch board of directors. He was crucial in managing the organization's financial resources and fundraising activities. Elashi was also involved in establishing the IAP. In a trial against the HLF, American authorities sentenced him to 60 years in prison.
- Akram Kharroubi: Head of the IAP office in Washington and later HLF representative in Ramallah.

In the documents uncovered during the investigation of HLF, a contact page document of the Palestine Committee was discovered. This document listed the telephone numbers of significant individuals in the United States involved in the Palestinian issue. The first name on the list is Musa Abu Marzook, while Nihad Awad and Omar Ahmed also appear on this list (refer to the screenshot of the document in the Appendices section and the screenshot below).

Name	City/Country	Fax	Phone
1. Mousa Abou Marzouk	RUSTON	318-255-6102	3182555534
2. Mohamed Akram	CHICAGO	312-434-3462	312-563-0937
25. Omar Yehya	C.A.		408-984-1254
26. Akram Al Kharoubi			
32. Nihad Awad	MINAPOLIS		602-378-3086
33. Mohamed Al Jaghlit	WISCONSON		715-835-0513

To achieve its goals, the Palestine Committee established several central organizations, each with specific functions:

Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP)

Founded in 1981, the IAP served as the main propaganda arm, disseminating pro-Hamas and anti-Israel materials throughout the U.S., and played a significant role in raising awareness and mobilizing support for the Palestinian cause. The group was shut down by authorities following links to terrorism back in 2004.[32]

IAP published and distributed materials that supported Hamas activities and criticized Israeli policy. The organization produced leaflets, magazines, and other publications to raise awareness of the Palestinian struggle and build support for Hamas among the Muslim population in the United States. The IAP also organized conferences, fundraisers, and events aimed at raising support for Hamas' causes.

The IAP's ties with Hamas are significant and well-documented. The organization was founded under the supervision of Hamas leaders Khaled Mashaal and Musa Abu Marzook. The IAP served as a front for Hamas, promoted its agenda, and provided support for its activities. In 2004, the organization was convicted of supporting terrorism in the United States, which led to its designation as a terrorist organization and its eventual dissolution.

Relationship to CAIR

The Islamic Association for Palestine is closely linked to the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) founding. Key IAP figures Nihad Awad and Omar Ahmad founded CAIR in 1994. Nihad Awad served as IAP's Director of Public Relations. Omar Ahmad served as President of IAP.

The establishment of CAIR was seen as a strategic move to create a more mainstream and neutral organization that could continue to support the rights of Muslims in the United States while maintaining covert ties to Hamas' agenda.

The close connection between the founding of CAIR and IAP indicates a connection between Hamas and CAIR – and may explain the real agenda behind the establishment of the organization – supporting Hamas in the U.S. and promoting an anti-Israel and antisemitic narrative under the guise of promoting civil rights.

Occupied Land Fund (later Holy Land Foundation, HLF)

Initially known as the Occupied Land Fund, the network's financial arm was responsible for raising and funneling funds to support Hamas activities. It was later renamed the Holy Land Foundation. U.S. authorities conducted a trial against the organization, at the end of which the organization was accused of supporting terrorism and was also declared a terrorist organization. The trial is, to this day, the most significant terrorist financing lawsuit in American history. In 2009, the organization's founders were sentenced to between 15 and 65 years in prison for "transferring$12 million to Hamas."[33]

United Association for Studies and Research (UASR)

Established as a research institute, UASR provided intellectual and strategic support to the Committee's activities, conducted research, and promoted policies consistent with Hamas' objectives.

1993 Philadelphia Meeting[34]

The Palestine Committee convened the 1993 Philadelphia Meeting in response to the Oslo Accords. In 1988, the Palestine Committee in the U.S. was established, which brought together Hamas' activities in the United States in fundraising, lobbying, education, and propaganda[35]. The meeting took place over three days at the Marriott Hotel near the Philadelphia Airport and was attended by about 20 activists. The main objective of the Palestine Committee was to discuss the impact of the Oslo Accords and formulate strategies to oppose the agreement while continuing to support Hamas' goals covertly.

The FBI officials closely monitored the Palestine Committee and set up wiretaps inside the hotel. They recorded most of the conversations that took place behind the doors of the hotel's conference room. Transcripts of most of these conversations were presented as evidence in the HLF trial.

The meeting, which was organized similarly to a meeting of the board of directors of a large corporation, began with security guidelines. Participants were instructed to refer to Hamas as "Samah" – his name spelled in reverse – or simply as "the movement" throughout the meeting and in telephone conversations.

Participants then began condemning the Oslo Accords, which Omar Ahmed called "between infidels and infidels." While formulating a joint position against the agreements was not difficult, the participants discussed ways to undermine them in the eyes of the Americans. Being well aware of the environment in which they operate, some speakers stressed the need to frame their opposition to the peace agreement in terms that would suit the Americans.

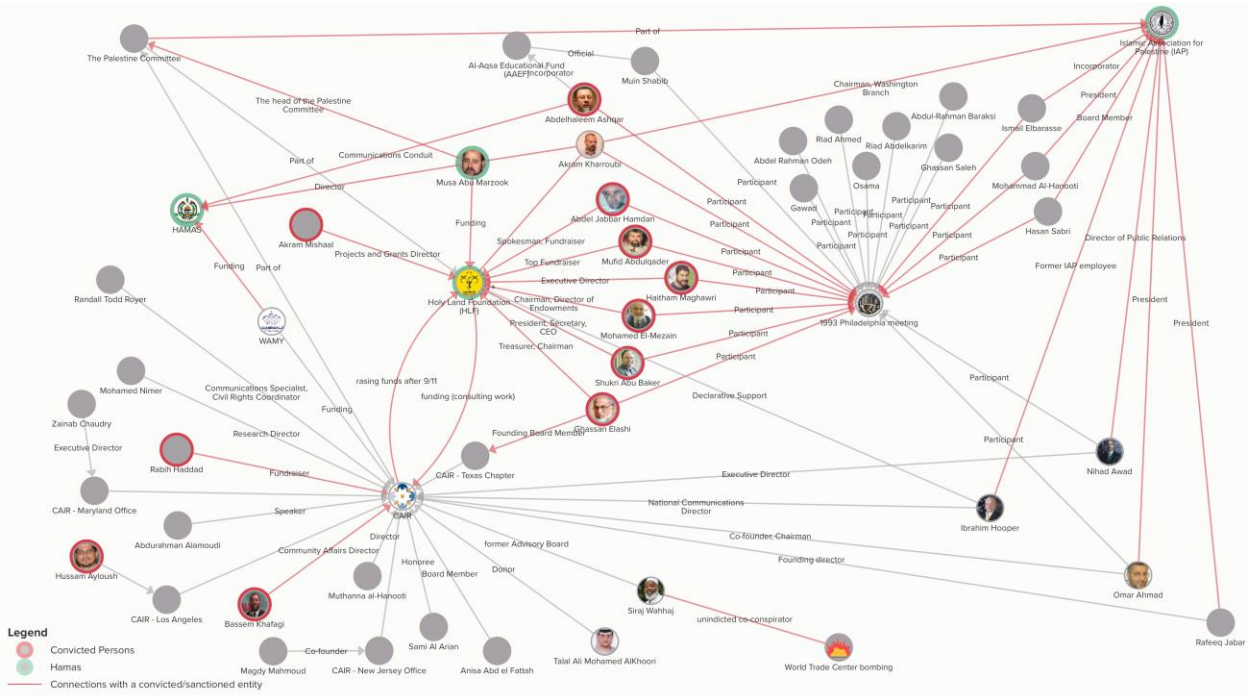
At the meeting, there was a discussion about the need to establish a new organization that would appear neutral and less extreme to the American public. This new organization would cover pro-Hamas activities and maintain a moderate image. A few months after this meeting, CAIR was established in Washington, D.C. Founding members of CAIR had previously been involved in the Palestine Committee and its affiliated organizations and had participated in the conference. For example, IAP President Omar Ahmed and Director of Public Relations Nihad Awad, both members of the Palestine Committee who attended the Philadelphia meeting, became the honorary chairman and CEO of CAIR, respectively. Rafeeq Jabar, who was the president of IAP, also became a founding director of CAIR, while former IAP employee Ibrahim Hooper became CAIR's communications director. Ghassan Elashi, treasurer of the Holy Land Foundation, became a founding board member of CAIR's Texas chapter, and evidence presented at the Dallas trial showed that HLF had transferred funds to CAIR for "consulting services." Finally, a July 1994 internal memorandum of the Palestine Committee recognized CAIR, along with IAP, UASR, and HLF.

Other topics discussed at the Philadelphia meeting

- Opposition to the Oslo Accords
    - The participants strongly condemned the Oslo Accords, seeing them as a betrayal of Palestinian rights.
    - Strategies to undermine the peace agreement were discussed in the eyes of the American public and policymakers.
- Framing the narrative
    - It was agreed that framing their opposition to the peace agreement regarding democracy and freedom of expression would suit American sensitivities.
    - Emphasis was placed on presenting the Palestinian Authority as a dictatorial regime and emphasizing its lack of representation and support for the Palestinian struggle.
- Maintaining support for Hamas:
    - The participants discussed the need to continue supporting Hamas while avoiding overt expressions of affiliation with the organization.

- A two-track approach was adopted: open support for Hamas within the Muslim community while presenting a moderate front to the American public and authorities.

- Financial strategies:
  - Fundraising for Hamas has been identified as crucial, with the Holy Land Foundation playing a central role in collecting and distributing funds.
  - It was decided to maintain a balance between charity projects and support for Hamas to avoid legal consequences.
- Education and propaganda efforts:
  - The importance of educating the American Muslim community, especially youth, about the Palestinian cause and the need to support Hamas was emphasized.
  - Plans were made to use Islamic schools, annual conferences, and student organizations to distribute materials and spokespeople pro-Hamas.
- Communications and Public Relations:
  - Participants recognized the need for a carefully crafted media strategy to defend Hamas without appearing to support violence.
  - Nihad Awad presented a program for media activism, including training activists to appear correctly in the media and writing op-eds in prominent American newspapers.



The organization's entire network of contacts can be found at

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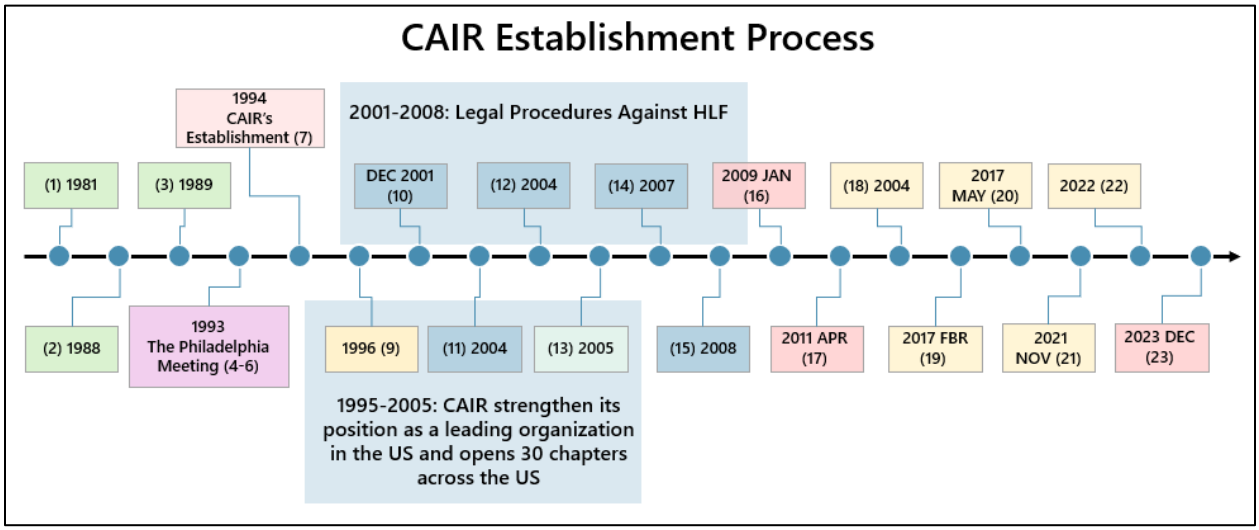

Details of significant events – Appendix

#	Event	Date	Category
1	Islamic Association for Palestine was founded. Serves as Hamas' main propaganda arm in the United States.	1981	Establishment of a Hamas network in the United States
2	The Palestine Committee was established in the United States under the leadership of Musa Abu Marzook.	1988	
3	HLF was founded and served as the fundraising arm of the Palestine Committee.	1989	
4	Philadelphia meeting: Key Hamas supporters, including Omer Ahmad and Nihad Awad, gather to discuss the response to the Oslo Accords.	1993	Philadelphia Meeting
5	The FBI wiretapped the meeting and revealed discussions about continued support for Hamas and the need for a new, neutral organization.		
6	The need for a new and neutral organization was agreed upon.		
7	Omar Ahmad and Nihad Awad founded the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) to serve as a civil rights organization for American Muslims.	1994	The organization's activities in the United States
8	CAIR positions itself as one of the largest Muslim civil rights organizations in the United States, with more than 30 regional offices and chapters.	1994-2005	Establishment of CAIR
9	CAIR handles the first case of hijab discrimination, establishing its role as an advocate for the rights of Muslim citizens in the United States.	1996	CAIR's U.S. Operations
10	The Holy Land Foundation (HLF) ceases operations when the U.S. government declares it a terrorist organization and confiscates its assets.	December 2001	HLF Statement
11	The HLF trial began, and evidence from FBI wiretaps from the Philadelphia meeting was presented in court.	2004	HLF Statement
12	The Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP) ceased operations and was disbanded by the U.S. government.	2004	HLF Statement
13	Omar Ahmad retired from CAIR's board of directors but continued to be active in CAIR's California chapter.	2005	-
14	CAIR and Omar Ahmad were mentioned as partners in HLF's activities during the trial against the organization.	2007	HLF Statement

15	Five HLF leaders were convicted of funneling $12.4 million to Hamas and sentenced to prison terms of up to 65 years.	2008	HLF Statement
16	FBI headquarters in Washington orders all departments to sever ties with CAIR, a policy that continues to this day.[36]	January 2009	U.S. activity against the organization
17	The Justice Department is seemingly closing an investigation into CAIR founder Omar Ahmed without filing criminal charges, despite requests from Dallas prosecutors.	April 2011	U.S. activity against the organization
18	CAIR continues to expand its influence through various civil rights campaigns.	2014	CAIR's U.S. Operations
19	CAIR opposes U.S. bills and executive orders to designate the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization, arguing that doing so would marginalize the American Muslim community.	February 2017	CAIR's U.S. Operations
20	The group is also challenging the Trump administration's travel ban, which targeted several Muslim-majority countries	May 2017	CAIR's U.S. Operations
21	Zahra Billoo, director of CAIR San Francisco, calls synagogues and major Jewish organizations "enemies" and calls for them to be monitored.	November 2021	CAIR's U.S. Operations
22	CAIR protests Congressional passage of the Antisemitism Awareness Act, which instructs the Department of Education to use the IHRA working definition of antisemitism. The organization argues that the definition "censors criticism of the Israeli government too broadly."	2022	CAIR's U.S. Operations
23	The Biden administration is disavowing and severing ties with CAIR after its executive director expressed support for the October 7 massacre, saying that Palestinians have the right to self-defense while denying Israel the same right.	December 2023	U.S. activity against the organization

Chapter 2: The Organization's Ties to Terrorism and Delegitimization Organizations

An in-depth review of CAIR's senior officials who attended the 1993 Philadelphia meeting

Nihad Awad

Nihad Awad is CEO and co-founder of the Council on Islamic Relations (CAIR), a position he has held since CAIR's founding in 1994.[37] Awad was born in a Palestinian refugee camp in Jordan in 1964 and later immigrated to the United States, where he studied civil engineering at the University of Minnesota during the 1990s.

After the Gulf War, he served as Director of Public Relations for the Islamic Association of Palestine (IAP) (the American Muslim Society and the American Middle Eastern League for Palestine).[38] A group that described itself as a "nonprofit organization" was convicted of providing support to Hamas and disbanded in 2004.

After founding CAIR in 1994, Awad became a prominent figure in the American Muslim community. Major media outlets frequently interviewed him, he testified before Congress on issues related to Muslims in America, and he conducted educational seminars on Islamic culture for law enforcement and corporate entities. Following the September 11, 2001, attacks, Awad was part of a group of American Muslim leaders invited by the White House to join President George W. Bush for a press conference condemning the attacks and the anti-Muslim acts that occurred in their wake.

Connection to terrorism

In 1994, Awad declared support for Hamas, although later, in 2006, he stated that he no longer supported Hamas.[39] In November 1994, four weeks after a Hamas suicide bombing that killed 23 Israelis, Awad was interviewed on CBS's "60 Minutes" news program, where he was asked his opinion of Hamas and replied:

> "Well, I think that's for people to judge there".
>
> "The United Nations Charter grants people who are under occupation to defend themselves against illegal occupation."[40]

Most recently, in November 2023, Awad sparked outrage with statements that the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel that killed more than 1,200 people:

> "The people of Gaza only decided to break the siege, the walls of the concentration camp, on October 7. And yes, I was happy to see people breaking the siege and throwing down the shackles of their own land, and walk free into their land, which they were not allowed to walk in. And yes, the people of Gaza have the

right to self-defense, have the right to defend themselves, and yes, Israel, as an occupying power, does not have that right to self-defense."[41]

The following statements were strongly condemned as "shocking" and "antisemitic" by Jewish groups, the Anti-Defamation League, and the White House under the Biden administration. Awad's comments allegedly reflect a pattern of "demonization against Israel and the Jewish people" during his leadership at CAIR. Following the statement, both CAIR and the White House stopped working on a national strategy to combat antisemitism. Awad was accused by Jay Takath, vice president of the United Jewish Fund, of "pursuing an Islamist agenda to undermine Israel since CAIR's inception, disguising it as a Palestinian liberation campaign." Awad is a frequent participant in pro-Palestinian demonstrations and often condemns the activities of Israel in the Gaza Strip and the P.A., especially after the events of October 7. On October 8, 2023, he posted the following:

"All Arab peoples must go out on Sunday, October 8, and every day, in demonstrations in support of the Palestinians and in rejection of normalization with the occupier and the apartheid regime."[42]

During the relocation of the American embassy to Jerusalem in 2017[43], he participated in demonstrations in front of the White House. In May 2021, he posted a photo of riots on the Temple Mount[44] and referred to the State of Israel as "apartheid." In November 2023, he criticized an IDF attack on UNRWA[45] offices in the Gaza Strip. In 2017, he even attended a demonstration with representatives of Neturei Karta in the United States[46]. In 2016, he was part of an event organized by an organization called Code Pink, where Hillary Clinton spoke and called for the liberation of Palestine[47]. In 2015, he participated in fundraising activities for the Gaza Strip organized by UNRWA[48]. After aid to Israel was approved in February 2024, Awad responded as follows:

"The Zionist lobby, or the pro-Israel lobby, was able to influence the Congress and the Senate to pass resolutions that give Israel $14 billion, regardless of the massacres. What is the reason for this moral and political corruption? It is because some institutions have managed to amass money over the years, and buy the loyalty of those [lawmakers]. The solution is that we liberate their loyalty from political corruption."[49]

Additional senior figures in the organization

Ibrahim Hooper

Hooper is the National Communications Director and Spokesperson of the entire CAIR organization[50]. He co-founded the organization with Awad in 1994. In January 2024, he condemned Nancy Fellows for claiming that Russia funded some pro-Palestinian protests in the U.S.[51] In a 2002 interview, he said:

"I wouldn't want to create the impression that I wouldn't like the government of the United States to be Islamic sometime in the future, "..." But I'm not going to do anything violent to promote that. I'm going to do it through education."[52]

In January 2024, Hooper participated in a pro-Palestinian demonstration in the United States, calling for a boycott and halt in aid to Israel.[53] In December 2023, he published a post condemning the practice of administrative detention, with the post picture showing a man wearing Hamas ribbons.[54]

Ibrahim Hooper @ibrahimhooper · Dec 1, 2023
Israeli, Palestinian and international human rights organizations have long condemned the practice of administrative detention, particularly when applied to children. #GazaGenocide #GenocideJoe #ceasefire #IsraelIsAnApartheidState
Israeli prisoner release shines light on system of detaining Palestinians without ...
From nbcnews.com
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72

In October 2001, when asked about his position on Hamas in an interview with the National Journal, he declined to comment[55]. In December 2001, when asked whether Hamas used the funds raised by the Holy Land Foundation, he dismissed the remarks as political accusations[56]. That same month, during an interview with The New York Times, he defended HLF:

"This action is really creating outrage in the Muslim community. The holy foundation has a long history of being a respected Muslim charity that does good work..."[57]

In September of that year, when asked whether he condemned al-Qaeda's activities, he replied that he only condemned Osama bin Laden[58]. In October 2008, he again refused to condemn Hamas and Hezbollah in an interview with NBC[59]. In late 2008, when asked in an interview with CNN whether the aspirations of the Palestinian population include the desire to make Hamas irrelevant, he ignored the question and answered as follows:

"Well, what you want to do is give the Palestinians an idea that their future can be better. That their children can actually eat. Can you imagine right now, in the twenty-first century, that we have a situation where there is a blockade keeping children from eating in any part of the world, and America is supporting that

blockade? It's outrageous, it's illegal, it's immoral, and it's against international law. At a minimum, we have to end the siege of the Gaza ghetto".[60]

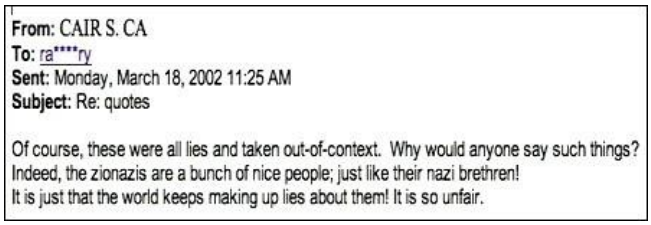
On March 22, 2004, in a spokesperson statement issued by CAIR, which was deleted from the website shortly after that, CAIR condemned the assassination of Ahmed Yassin, then one of Hamas' leaders:

"The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) today condemned the assassination of a wheelchair-bound Palestinian Muslim religious leader, calling it an act of "state terrorism."[61]

In 2006, Hooper, along with several other founding members of CAIR, such as Awad, and U.S. government officials, including former North Carolina Senator Larry Shaw, who later served as chairman of CAIR's board of directors, embarked on a delegation to the Persian Gulf to raise funds for the organization[62]. Between 2010 and 2011, he appeared several times on the Iranian news channel PressTV, which had interviewed Hamas, Hezbollah, Samidoun, and PIJ operatives several times.[63]

Hussam Ayloush

Ayloush has served as the Los Angeles branch manager since 1998.[64] In 2013, he refused to condemn Hamas.[65] In December 2023, he reiterated that Israel had no right to defend itself on October 7 and even compared it to Nazi Germany.[66] In November 2018, he called Israel a "cancerous tumor." In May 2021, he claimed that Israel was an occupying state under the hashtag #EndIsraeliApartheid.[67]


From: CAIR S. CA
To: ra****ry
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2002 11:25 AM
Subject: Re: quotes

Of course, these were all lies and taken out-of-context. Why would anyone say such things?
Indeed, the zionazis are a bunch of nice people; just like their nazi brethren!
It is just that the world keeps making up lies about them! It is so unfair.

That same month, he participated in an American Muslims for Palestine (AMP) protest in front of the Israeli consulate in Los Angeles and was also one of the speakers. During the conference, he expressed support for the Palestinian population and its struggle against Israel[68]. One of the conference organizers is Al-Awda, an organization affiliated with Samidoun, and he is even collaborating with him to organize demonstrations. In 2002, in an internal correspondence with the organization, he referred to Zionism and Nazism as "sisters":[69]

Hussam Ayloush
@HussamA
Follow
@Kasra_Shah interesting how supporters of Israel use exact same excuses that Nazis used to justify their murders the Warsaw ghetto.
11:14 PM · Aug 4, 2014
1

In 2014, he again compared Israel and Nazism, accusing it of violating the Geneva Convention.[70] That same year, he again compared supporters of Israel and supporters of Nazism[71]:

In 2004, he expressed support for Wagdy Ghoneim, a Hamas and Muslim Brotherhood official known for supporting Hamas and suicide bombings

against Israel.[72] Ayloushwas involved in the struggle to prevent Ghoneim's deportation from the United States.[73] The same Ghoneim spoke in 1998 in New York at a rally organized by the IAP, which included intense antisemitic manifestations. In 2006, Ayloush claimed that CAIR had nothing to do with the rally's events after allegations that the organization was involved in financing the rally surfaced.[74]

Additional links to terrorism

Siraj Wahhaj, imam of the At-Taqwa Mosque in Brooklyn, was a Board Member of CAIR's national headquarters. Wahhajwas designated by the U.S. Department of Justice as an unindicted co-conspirator during the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.[75]

Rabih Haddad was the organization's fundraiser in Ann Arbor, Michigan[76]. Haddad, originally Lebanese, was accused of raising funds and financing Al-Qaeda elements in Pakistan (Makhtab al-Khidamat – MAK).[77]

Ties to pro-Palestinian and anti-Israeli organizations

American Muslims for Palestine

The AMP and CAIR maintain cooperative relations, mainly on issues related to promoting Palestinian rights, criticizing Israel's actions, and promoting and fueling protests against Israel in the United States. Both organizations are founding organizations of the Council of Muslim Organizations of the United States (USCMO), which serves as a coalition of Muslim and Palestinian organizations in the United States.

AMP: Founded in 2006, AMP is an organization dedicated to "educating the American public and media on issues related to Palestine and its people. "AMP focuses on advancing Palestinian rights and raising awareness of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and emphasizing Palestinian suffering and the Israeli occupation of the territory.

Mutual activities since October 7, 2023

- On October 7, AMP and CAIR, as part of the USCMO, issued a statement condemning Israel's actions in Gaza, Judea, and Samaria and called for an end to "atrocities against Palestinians."[78]
- AMP and CAIR jointly sent a letter to the Biden administration requesting Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and a deferral of forced exit (DED) for Palestinians in the U.S. in response to proposed legislation to prohibit Palestinians from entering the U.S.[79]
- CAIR supported an event organized by AMP called "Palestine Advocacy Days 2023," which took place on October 23-24, 2023, in Washington, D.C. The event focused on protests for Palestinian rights and included discussions on opposition to settlement expansion, opposition to Israel's activity in Gaza, and other topics.

- In a joint statement on April 1, 2024, CAIR, AMP, and Jewish Voice for Peace Baltimore called for a federal investigation into the activities of an Israeli real estate company, alleging theft of Palestinian territory and possible violations of international law. The organizations even organized a protest on the same issue.[80]
- On October 19, 2023, CAIR-NJ and AMP-NJ held a joint press conference calling on politicians in New Jersey to support a ceasefire in Gaza.[81]
- On October 30, 2023, CAIR's Maryland office and AMP organized emergency protests calling for a ceasefire in Gaza.[82]
- On April 1, 2024, CAIR, AMP, and Jewish Voice for Peace Baltimore organized a protest against "ethnic cleansing".

Students for Justice in Palestine

- Following the suspension of SJP chapters at institutions such as Colombia University, CAIR-NY issued a statement condemning the university's actions as an attack on freedom of expression and an attempt to silence pro-Palestinian voices.
- October 11, 2023 – CAIR and SJP issued guidelines for protesting students as part of a significant effort by both organizations to fuel student protests against campus Israel83
- October 17, 2023: CAIR-LA and SJP condemned alleged attacks against pro-Palestinian students at UCLA during a virtual panel titled "State of Emergency Palestine."[84]
- CAIR provides legal support and information to SJP-affiliated students, including legal rights training during demonstrations and legal defense teams for students arrested at protests.
- January 24, 2024: CAIR-GA, along with SJP and other organizations, sent a letter to Emory University demanding that Palestinian, Muslim, and Arab students be protected from harassment. The letter detailed instances of harassment and called on the university to take immediate action to safeguard the rights of these students, emphasizing "their right to support the rights of Palestinians without fear of retaliation."[85]

Chapter 3: Areas and Scope of Activity in the United States

Connections to U.S. Organizations and Government

Despite the FBI's prohibition, the organization appears to be cultivating relationships with government organizations from all corners of government. Mainly through marketing workshops and lectures to these

bodies to promote "understanding and education towards Islam." The organization was also part of the White House program to combat antisemitism. Still, it was removed from the list of organizations taking part in the program following statements made by members of the organization following the events of October 7.

The organization works on congressional committees and other government agencies at the federal and national levels to advance its agenda for Muslim rights in the United States and other issues, but a review of its annual reports shows that its impact on members of Congress is not significant.

In its 2023 final report, the organization mentioned that it attended the seminar and gave lectures to 3 government agencies:

- Department of Justice (DOJ)
- Homeland Security (DHS)
- Transportation Security Administration (TSA)

"In 2023, we empowered American Muslims by arming them with the tools and services necessary to fight against abuses at work, at school, in the prison system, while banking, and while traveling, to name a few.

Our active engagement with the White House and federal agencies to counter Islamophobia underscored CAIR's unwavering commitment to championing domestic Muslim priorities. **Participation in DOJ, DHS, and TSA meetings and webinars,** as well as promoting the Nonprofit Security Grant with FEMA, reflected our proactive approach to addressing community needs."

These bodies are responsible for and are closely connected to U.S. national security. This connection raises the question of how to allow an entity with ties to terrorism to be in contact with these bodies.

Education

CAIR markets a variety of educational programs in the United States, according to its website, whose goal is to "foster understanding between American Muslims and the wider community."[86]

Their two main educational approaches are:

- Educating American Muslims about their rights and obligations as citizens, empowering them to participate fully in civic life.
- Educating the broader community about Islam.

Specific educational programs and workshops offered by CAIR branches:

- Educational seminars for schools and institutions on Islam, Muslims, inclusion, and equality.

- Workshops for the Muslim Community on Civil Rights, American Muslim History, Youth Development and Mental Well-Being
- Workshops Know your rights.
- Islam 101: An Introduction to Islam and Muslim Civilization.
- Muslim Youth Leadership Programs and Summits to Empower Young Muslims in Civic Engagement and Leadership
- Anti-bullying workshops for students, parents, and educators to address the rise in bullying of Muslim students.

A closer reading of the reading materials on the organization's website shows that one of the organization's goals is to blur the connection between Islam and terrorist or radical Islamist activity. For example, in a guide published by the organization called "*Remembering and Reflecting on September 11, 2001, in the classroom*". It was written that the events of 9/11 should be separated from Islam and try not to mention the words "jihad," "Islamist terrorism," or "Islamic terrorist":

"Avoid using language that validates the claims of the 9/11 attackers by associating their acts of mass murder with Islam and Muslims. For example, avoid using inaccurate and inflammatory terms such as "Islamic terrorists," "jihadists," or "radical Islamic terrorists." [87]

The organization also offers bookable seminars and workshops on various topics, including a controversial seminar called "American Jews and Political Power: Myth or Reality." Details about the workshop:

"This workshop examines the controversial topic of Jewish political power in the U.S. in a fair and balanced manner. We will discuss the key organizations in the American Jewish community, such as ADL, AIPAC, ACJ, and JCRC. We will also examine the heated debate inside the Jewish establishment over Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands and learn about the young Jewish activists who are supporting the BDS (boycott, divestment, sanctions) campaign against Israel."

Posting such material on the website of an organization claiming to fight antisemitism raises difficult questions. It can be argued that there is antisemitic content that passes through workshops and lessons taught by the organization and is not mentioned on the site to maintain an innocent and outwardly neutral appearance.

Based on the description of the workshop, the organization promotes antisemitic narratives and conspiracy theories. Framing the issue as a "Jewish political force" promotes an antisemitic narrative that Jews have disproportionately evil political power.

The mention of Jewish organizations such as the ADL, AIPAC, AJC, and JCRC as examples of "Jewish power" suggests that these groups are part of a coordinated Jewish agenda rather than Jewish advocacy and advocacy organizations.

The mention of "young Jewish activists" supporting anti-Israel BDS in a workshop on "Jewish Power" is a divisive and arguably antisemitic claim by praising Jews who oppose Israel and portraying them as righteous while Jews who support Israel are traitors or immoral.

While criticism of Israel or its policies is not inherently antisemitic, this workshop focuses on "Jewish power." If this workshop is any indication, CAIR seems to be engaging in antisemitic discourse despite their stated opposition to antisemitism. An educational program that examines "Jewish power" as a "myth or reality," an example of promoting blatantly antisemitic conspiracy discourse under the guise of education.

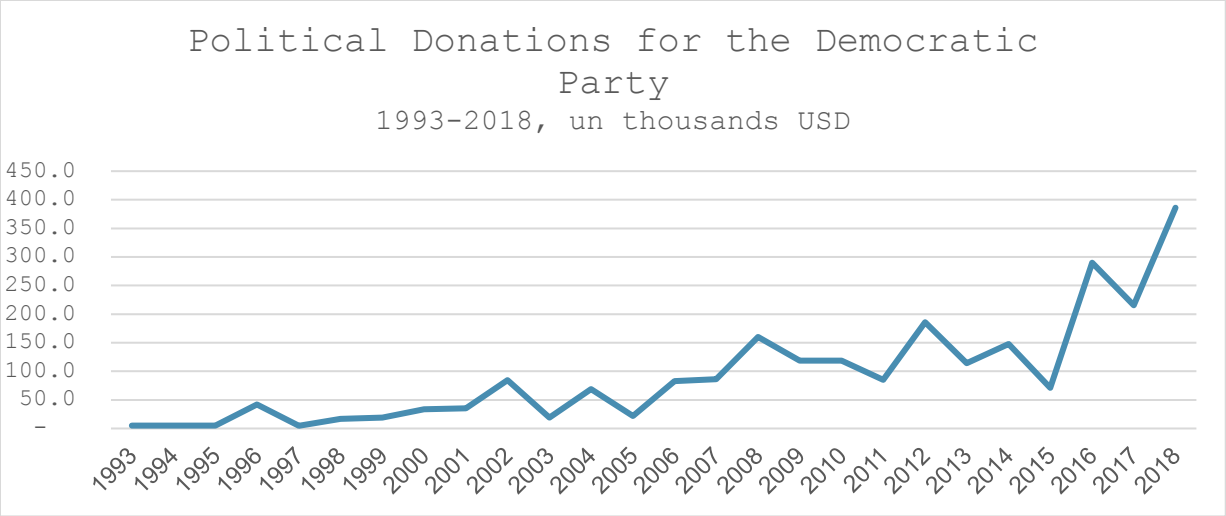
Contact with the FBI

In January 2009, following the organization's ties to HLF, FBI headquarters in Washington ordered all departments to sever a relationship with CAIR, a policy that continues to this day.[88]Despite this order, the organization has tried to contact the FBI in the form of "enrichment" workshops that the organization offers law enforcement. The organization appears to be trying to influence law enforcement through education that seems seemingly innocent but can include antisemitic and anti-Israeli content.

Political lobbying

As part of its ongoing activities, the organization promotes its agenda through lobbying, emphasizing activities supporting the Democratic Party. To understand the organization's political finance activity, a focused analysis was conducted of the Islamist Money in Politics database of the Middle East Forum from the United States. The database tracks political funding based on the Federal Election Commission campaign databases in various U.S. states. The database is updated until the beginning of 2019.

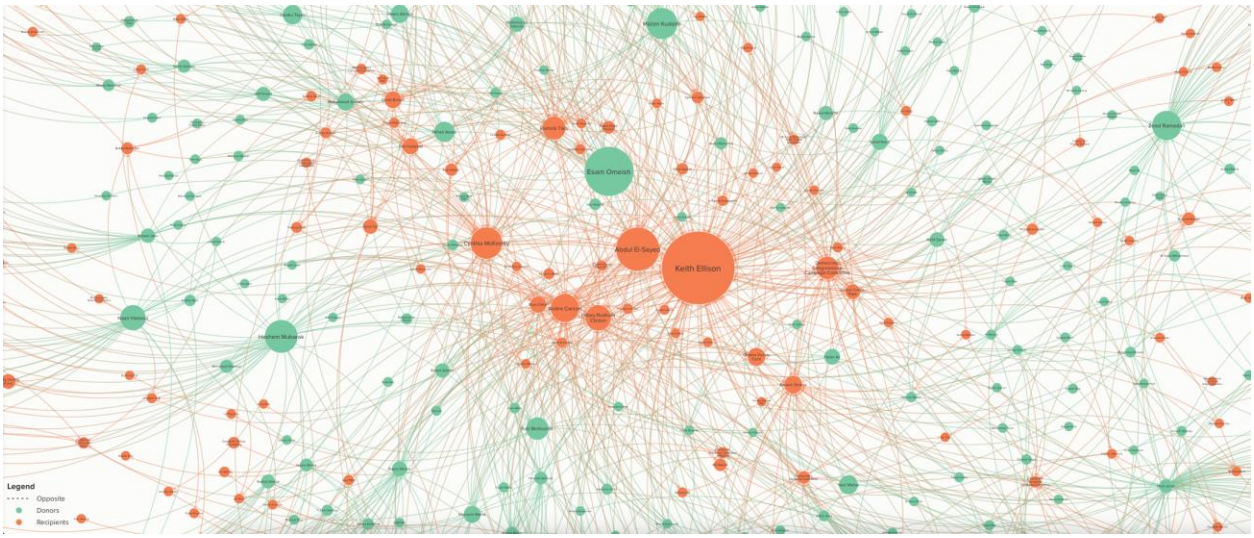
An analysis of the data shows growth in funding volumes over the years, with the peak year being 2018 when the organization contributed close to $200,000. Most of the funding (84%) goes to the Democratic Party and its members, compared to only 13% for the Republican Party.



An analysis of the database shows that over the years, through more than 330 donors affiliated with the organization (functionaries or those affiliated with it), the organization has funded close to a million and a half dollars from its inception until 2019. Among the individuals who received the most donations are senators and presidential candidates, mainly from the Democratic Party.

Notable figures who have received donations over the years include Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, Rashida Tlaib, Ilian Omar, Cynthia McKinney, and Andre Carson. The politician who received the most donations from the organization is Keith Ellison, an American politician who serves as the Attorney General of the State of Minnesota. From 2006 to 2018, he received donations totaling $140,900.

An analysis of the donation map shows many donations in small amounts. The scope of each donation can range from a few dollars to a few thousand dollars. In doing so, it is possible to disguise the true extent of CAIR's contributions to political causes. For example, Keith Ellison received 335 donations between 2006 and 2018 from 115 different donors linked to CAIR.



The donation map can be viewed at the following link:

https://embed.kumu.io/1dda81db94e7456c1b573eb1c4490ed8

Candidates pushed by the organization to representative organizations (House of Representatives, etc.):

Ilhan Omar is a Somali American politician and member of the Democratic Party. In November 2018, she was elected to the United States House of Representatives, representing Minnesota's 5th District. Omar is critical of Israel's policies. In 2012, she called Israel an "apartheid state" that "hypnotized the world into ignoring civilian bombings" and criticized a law designed to restrict the BDS movement.[89] After being accused of antisemitism, she noted that criticism of Israel does not stem from hatred of Jews. [90]During a meeting with activists at a synagogue during the 2018 elections, Omar stated that boycotting Israel would harm the achievement of a two-state solution and was intended to create constant pressure on Israel.[91] Following a wave of legislation against the BDS movement, in 2019, she introduced a bill supporting the right to boycott to promote human and civil rights in the United States and abroad.[92]

In August 2019, the Prime Minister of Israel and the Israeli Minister of the Interior banned her entry into Israel due to her support for BDS.[93]

In August 2019, the Prime Minister of Israel and the Israeli Minister of the Interior banned her entry into Israel due to her support for BDS.[94]

A post of CAIR's President endorsing Omar: https://x.com/NihadAwad/status/1063197533126778881

Fadi Cadore (Fady Qaddoura), a Democrat, is the first Muslim senator in Indiana and the first Arab-American Muslim to serve in the Indiana General Assembly. Cadore was born In the Palestinian Authority and immigrated to the United States in 2000 at 19 to study computer science. Cadore became a U.S. citizen in 2008 and has worked in various positions in Indiana's state agencies, most recently as comptroller of the city of Indianapolis before his election to the state Senate in 2020[95]

Qadura Tand Mech on Palestinian rights and has criticized Israeli policy in the territories in the past. In 2021, he co-authored a resolution in the Indiana Senate condemning the planned eviction of Palestinian families in East Jerusalem and airstrikes on Gaza. The resolution also called on the U.S. government to ensure that aid to Israel is not used to support human rights violations against Palestinians[96]. However, he rejected the BDS movement and said he would not support any law that "attacks, In any form, shape or form, you are the State of Israel."[97]

A post of CAIR's President endorsing Cadore: https://x.com/NihadAwad/status/1324784540326526977

Jesse Sabaya (Jesse Sbaih) He is a Muslim American lawyer and former Democratic candidate who ran for the U.S. House of Representatives in Nevada's 3rd Congressional District in 2016. Born in Jordan, he immigrated to the United States as a child and grew up in Nevada. He received his law degree from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and practiced law in the Las Vegas area.[98]

A post of CAIR's CEO Awad endorsing Sabaya: https://x.com/NihadAwad/status/722105639300833280

Elected officials the organization rubs shoulders with:

https://belarabiyah.com/Governor-State-California-USA-invites/

Field Activity

The organization conducts various field activities throughout the United States, focusing on campuses and communities with large Muslim audiences. These activities include protests, demonstrations, workshops, training sessions, seminars, and more.

CAIR frequently organizes and participates in demonstrations to address problems affecting Muslim communities and to support Palestinian rights. The protests are taking place in response to events, such as the war in Gaza, and aim to raise awareness of what CAIR perceives as injustices against Palestinians and Muslims around the world.

CAIR has been involved in numerous Pro-Palestinian demonstrations, often in collaboration with other groups. These demonstrations are intended to draw attention to Israel's policies in Gaza and the West Bank and to demand action from the U.S. government to support Palestinian rights.

There are collaborations with various organizations in the field of Islamophobia in general, an argument that the organization uses extensively in laundering its activities. For example, at a 2019 conference, AMP's Hatem Bazian and Nihad Awad collaborated on this topic.[99]

Islamophobia is Not What You Think, Dalia Mogahed, Hatem Bazian,
MAS-ICNA ANNUAL CONVENTION McCORMICK PLACE | CHICAGO
McCORMICK PLACE
Dalia Mogahed: "Islamophobia is Not What You Think"
18TH ANNUAL MAS-ICNA CONVENTION, McCormick Place
Dec 29, 2019

Activities on campuses

CAIR is particularly active on college campuses. Activities focus on defending the rights of Muslim and pro-Palestinian students while promoting the pro-Palestinian narrative and raising support for the Palestinian agenda.[100]The organization supports student groups that support pro-Palestinian protests and often works against universities to protect student's rights to freedom of expression. The organization's campus activities are usually carried out in cooperation with other organizations, including Students for Justice in Palestine and Jewish Voice for Peace:

CAIR has worked closely with SJP, particularly in legal and advocacy efforts. For example, CAIR filed a lawsuit on behalf of SJP in Texas to challenge an executive order that they claimed restricted freedom of expression related to pro-Palestinian activism.[101] In addition, CAIR, SJP, and JVP issued a joint statement in response to criticism from the Anti-Defamation League (ADL).[102]

CAIR has collaborated with JVP on several occasions to support protesters and respond to criticism against them. The two organizations issued joint statements and were involved in campus activities supporting the pro-Palestinian protests.

It regularly publishes reports documenting alleged violations of freedom of expression and incidents of Islamophobia on campus.[103] These reports are used to support policy changes and call on universities to negotiate with students involved in activism.[104]In addition to publishing the reports, the organization helps students and even encourages them to file complaints against the university if it has opposed or attempted to act against the pro-Palestinian protests in any way.

Coverage complaints filed by CAIR since October 7:

- July 10, 2024: CAIR-LA filed a complaint against UCLA's David Geffen School of Medicine for allegedly discriminating against a Palestinian-American Muslim medical student. The complaint is awaiting an investigation by the Department of Civil Rights (OCR).[105]
- April 5, 2024: CAIR-Georgia and Palestine Legal have filed a complaint against Emory University for alleged anti-Palestinian, anti-Arab, and Islamophobic discrimination. The complaint requires an immediate OCR investigation.[106]
- July 22, 2024: CAIR's Cleveland chapter filed a complaint against Case Western Reserve University alleging ongoing discrimination against Palestinian, Muslim, and Arab students. The university has denied the allegations.[107]
- April 23, 2024: CAIR-NJ and the U.S.-Arab Anti-Discrimination Commission (ADC) have filed a complaint against Rutgers University for allegedly ongoing anti-Palestinian discrimination on Newark's and New Brunswick campuses since October 2023. The complaint is pending OCR investigation.[108]
- On May 8, 2024, CAIR-SFBA and the U.S.-Arab Commission on Discrimination (ADC) jointly filed an 11-page complaint alleging anti-Palestinian, anti-Arab, and Islamophobic discrimination within Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD). The complaint described numerous instances of harassment, defamation, physical assault, censorship, and unequal treatment of Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim students and staff. On June 21, 2024, OCR confirmed it would investigate the allegations.

In July 2024, the organization also announced the opening of a support fund for pro-Palestinian students to "support their struggle and protest against the war in Gaza and against Israel."[109] The foundation will provide $1,000 to students to support pro-Palestinian protests on campus.

Documentation "Violations of freedom of expression and racism."

In August 2024, CAIR released a report titled "'Hostility': How universities target anti-genocide protesters while enabling anti-Palestinian racism and Islamophobia." The report, sent to more than 400 university leaders, documents how many universities allegedly facilitated attacks on Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim students, using disciplinary action and police brutality to silence protesters. CAIR called on universities to negotiate with student protesters and stop discriminating against them.[110]

Legal protection for protesting students

CAIR collaborates with the Council of Muslim Organizations of the United States (USCMO) and the Muslim Legal Foundation of America (MLFA) to launch the "Student-Lawyer Campus Legal Defense Initiative." An online database that connects students facing criminal charges for offenses they committed during pro-Palestinian protests with criminal defense attorneys willing to represent them.[111]

Additional panels and events

- CAIR organizes panels and discussions on Gaza-related issues to raise awareness and drive campus media coverage. These events often feature speakers discussing the humanitarian and political aspects of the Gaza conflict and encouraging students to engage in activism.
- In partnership with other organizations, CAIR-Ohio hosted a solidarity prayer event at Ohio State University aimed at reclaiming a sacred space on campus that has been "marred by law enforcement brutality."[112]

Workshops and Educational Guidance

CAIR conducts Know Your Rights workshops for Muslim students and community members.[113]These sessions teach participants about their legal rights in the United States, focusing on topics such as discrimination, interactions with law enforcement, civil liberties, and freedoms related to the freedom to protest and demonstrate.

Impact on the definition of antisemitism in the United States

CAIR works in a variety of ways against acceptance of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition against antisemitism, which is widely used to identify and combat antisemitic acts and rhetoric.

The IHRA definition describes antisemitism as "a certain perception of Jews, which may manifest as hatred of Jews." The definition has been approved as a working definition by 1,116 entities around the world,

including 30 states, the U.S. Department of State, and the U.S. Congress under the Antisemitism Awareness Act.

The organization consistently opposes the adoption of the working definition at various levels of government and by organizations in the United States. While the definition explicitly states that criticism of Israel similar to that directed against any other country cannot be considered antisemitic, CAIR argues that it poses a threat to freedom of expression and the right of the organization and its supporters to protest against Israel and in favor of Palestinian rights. They argue that the definition expands the definition of antisemitism to criticism of "Israeli settler colonialism and human rights violations against Palestinians." However, this framing is misleading, presenting actions aimed at countering antisemitism as violating human rights.[114]

The organization works in a variety of ways to influence the acceptance of the definition in various states across the United States and at the federal level – organizing demonstrations, appealing to elected officials, lobbying, media appearances, and more.

In May 2024, CAIR condemned the U.S. House of Representatives for approving the Antisemitism Awareness Act, which directs the Department of Education to use the IHRA definition.[115]

Action Alert: Urge Congress to Vote NO on Anti-Free Speech Bills Silencing Pro-Palestine Advocacy

Ismail Allison May 13, 2024 1:16 pm

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the nation's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization, is calling on all Americans to urge their members of Congress to vote against the Countering Antisemitism Act (H.R.7921 / S.4091) in the House and Senate, and the Anti-Semitism Awareness Act (H.R.6090 / S.4127) in the Senate. These misleadingly titled bills expand the definition of what constitutes antisemitism to include legitimate criticism of Israel's human rights record in an attempt to silence pro-Palestine activism.

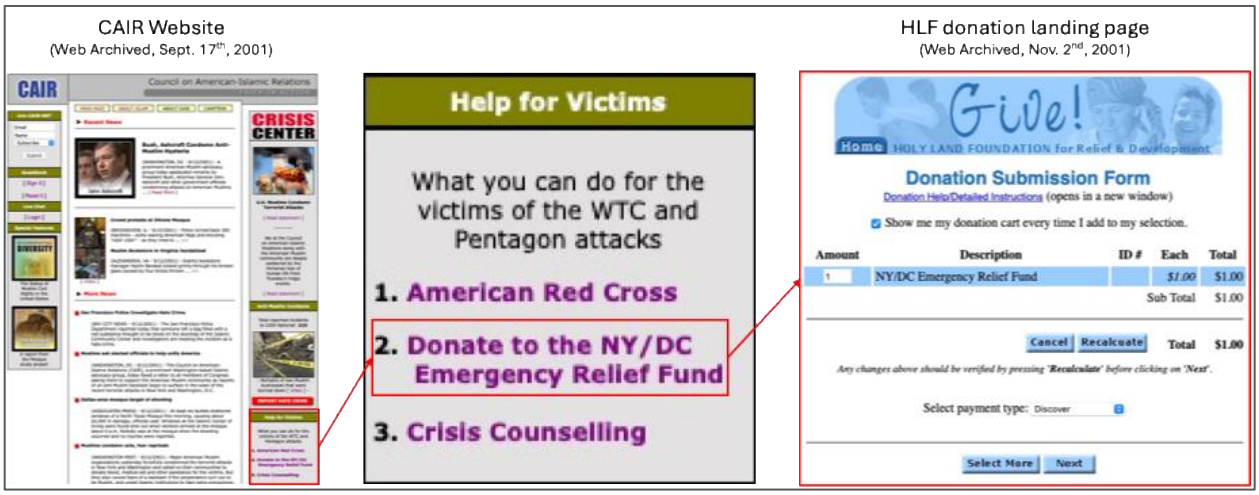
Aside from opposition at the federal level, starting in 2020, CAIR chapters in several states, including Indiana, Kansas, New Jersey, Maryland, Florida, and Georgia, have challenged and lobbied against legislation that would adopt or advance the IHRA definition in those states.[116]

As part of these efforts, the organization was able to enter the list of organizations that take part in implementing the U.S. government's strategy on antisemitism as one of its partners to influence the decision-making process and the content conveyed within the framework of government programs. Following various statements by the organization in praise of the October 7, the administration removed them from the list of organizations.

Chapter 4: Funding Sources

Broadly speaking, the organization's funding comes from diverse sources, such as various private foundations (such as Islamic Relief, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and Schwab Charitable Fund) and U.S. government agencies and departments (such as Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Homeland Security - Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Small Business Administration).[117]

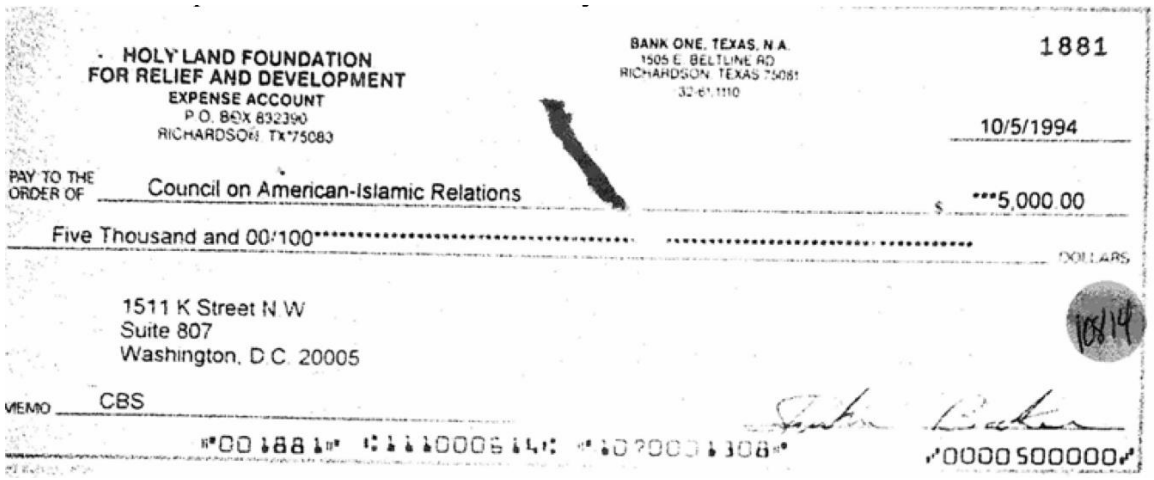
After 9/11, the organization incorporated a fundraising link for the NY/DC Emergency Relief Fund on its web page. Clicking on the link leads to a fundraising page of the Holy Land Foundation, which, in fact, raised $12 million for Hamas during its years of activity.



In addition, there are multiple indications indicating that HLF provided initial funding for CAIR upon its inception in the 1990s. Evidence of this can be found in many official documents, such as the Florida Senate

resolution, a similar resolution by the Arkansas House of Representatives in 2019, and numerous articles attesting to it. In various cases, CAIR served as a fundraising arm for HLF.

The $5,000 funding was critical for the organization in its inception. This amount was received by physical check and cashed by CAIR, indicating a personal closeness between the parties. The following is a photocopy of the check as obtained during the HLF investigation:



HOLY LAND FOUNDATION
FOR RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT
EXPENSE ACCOUNT
P.O. BOX 832390
RICHARDSON TX 75083

BANK ONE, TEXAS, N.A.
1505 E. BELTLINE RD
RICHARDSON, TEXAS 75081

1881

10/5/1994

PAY TO THE ORDER OF Council on American-Islamic Relations $ ***5,000.00

Five Thousand and 00/100********** DOLLARS

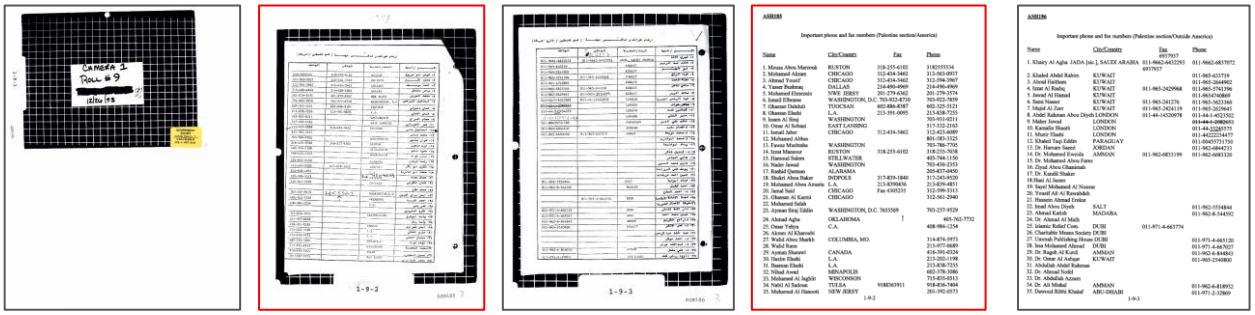
1511 K Street N.W.
Suite 807
Washington, D.C. 20005

10/14

MEMO CBS

"0000500000"

Palestine Committee contact page appendix from evidence in HLF investigation



On page 4 (translation of page 1 in the above view) are the names of Musa Abu Marzook, Nihad Awad, and Omar Ahmed (also known as Omar Yehya)

Name	City/Country	Fax	Phone
1. Mousa Abou Marzouk	RUSTON	318-255-6102	3182555534
2. Mohamed Akram	CHICAGO	312-434-3462	312-563-0937
25. Omar Yehya	C.A.		408-984-1254
26. Akram Al Kharoubi			
32. Nihad Awad	MINAPOLIS		602-378-3086

:Link to document

https://www.investigativeproject.org/case_docs/us-v-holy-land-foundation/3654/important-fax-and-phone-numbers-palestine-section-america.pdf#page=4

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